

# FREE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH.

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Number 2

The Infernal Spirit now rampant in the Board of Missions.

Our attention has been drawn, by the citation of our correspondent "I. F." to the remarkable pronouncement of the Board of Domestic Missions, whereby the piety of the Church is to be inflated to liberality in supplying the Holy Inquisition at Philadelphia with funds for carrying on its schemes for harrassing and wasting the churches of the Southern and Border States. And we are free to say that though we have read something of Papal devices for raising funds and the motives for giving suggested by them in the days of Luther, we have read of nothing quite so infernal in spirit as the suggestions of this pastoral from Philadelphia to Protestant Christian people, under the blinding light of the 19th century.

Our correspondent calls attention to the argument founded on view No. 5, in the survey of the Mission field, and to "the lie in the right hand" of its logic—the unmitigated defamation of the great body of the Pastors and stated supplies of the Border State churches, as violent men who are tearing the churches "deceiving souls"—in "sympathy with rebellion"—"treading under foot the immortal hopes of men"—and having "strange joy in the ruin of churches." All this is no marvel; for to Popes generally may be applied the Apostle's proverb concerning those among whom he left Titus—"The Cretons are always liars." Popes had said like things of Wickliffe, Luther, Calvin and Knox, often before!

But we do not remember ever to have met with so palpable a substitution of the infernal in tone and spirit for the spirit and tone of the gospel, as in the following compound of insinuated falsehoods, and cold-blooded malignity concerning the poor, wasted Presbyterian people of the South, put forth as a motive for christian beneficence:

"There is an increasing number South, who cling to the old Church, in spite of persecution and unmanly opposition—many of them Union and loyal through the war, and some swept away by the deluge, now recovering their feet, plead for aid. But for these we might leave the South alone, and employ our energies in fields won for us by the blood of our fathers. But the war has left a terrible problem before them, to look after a white population degraded, and to care for emancipated slaves, by a necessity which will declare itself every succeeding year. But we submit to the churches, whether every interest of religion and dictate of humanity do not require us to care for these brethren, yearning for the old Church and the home of their fathers? It is possible that for years to come, these men may be forced to labour for the black man with all the scandal this labour involves, and bear the same persecutions our missionaries endure in heathen lands. Well, are not their souls precious and do we not owe them a debt? We have no connection with their political status—we dare not, the North dare not neglect their souls. The storm of passion must pass away, if there be any true religion South, and we will bide the time and wait the evolutions of a Providence which in these late years has made the wrath of man to praise Him.

This is a rapid survey of the work before our Board. Can we fulfil the obligation? The North has not been impoverished; she never was wealthy. Now this wealth is God's; the gold and silver are His. \$68,000 was the amount received last year from churches, with a membership of 239,306; \* \* \* and yet so far by nearly \$50,000 have our receipts from the churches fallen off. But with our present income and at our present scale of appropriations, we cannot hold out two years longer. What we are doing is in virtue of a large legacy received last year. If there be no corresponding increase in the collections, what then? contraction? surrender in the field and compelled to stand aside, that other churches may go forward to reap fields we might have entered. A crisis has come upon us; we have reached the point of growth or decline. It rests with pastors and elders to decide the question.

Now what surprises us is not so much that these Philadelphia Cardinals should entertain such sentiments, for we have suspected all the while that this spirit of infernal hate toward all white men south of Mason and Dixon's line was underlying their whole policy. Nor would it have surprised us that Dr. Janeway speaking for himself only, and unofficially, should perpetrate such a piece of silly malignity. For manifestly nature had a very determined purpose not to make a great, wise man out of Dr. Janeway, and in this regard grace has not triumphed over nature. But that a Board having charge of the work of Christ's Church should have allowed such an utterance to go forth by way of solemn appeal to the faith and piety of God's people is passing strange!

These then are the latest practical "uses" derived from the Assembly's platform of "doctrine, loyalty and freedom." The souls of the "loyal" only, in the South are worth saving! The benevolent purposes of Northern Christians have been accomplished in inflicting the curse of emancipation upon the poor negro, unprepared for it, to leave him as a body of sin and death, chained to the white man of the South, and thereby prevent his ever rising again to his

former superiority of genius and civilization to the annoyance of Northern self complacency. The highest of virtues is to be like Judas very "loyal" to the Chief Priests and Elders of the "old Church," though apostate, at the expense of playing the traitor to a man's immediate friends and neighbors, to the particular interests entrusted to him, and to Jesus the Master. Whether the Southern people are heathen or Christian, or whether there be any true religion among them is one of those hidden mysteries which Providence alone can develop. And having destroyed the social structure of the South, the North now stands in the position of the eminent patriarch Cain, saying "we have no connection with their political status"—"are we our brother's keeper? This, we understand, is the platform in its development.

We are not surprised to be told that, under such an evangel, the churches have fallen off \$1000 per month in their contributions from the meagre \$68,000 of last year. Far more surprising is it to find the Second Church, Danville, Ky., reported as contributing money to the pious purposes of this Board as above indicated. And not less surprising to find it announced that the new "loyal" Presbyteries of Kentucky have renewed their allegiance to the Pope and conclave at Philadelphia, which the Synod of Kentucky suspended five years ago. Whether they will have the unblushing impudence to ask Kentucky Christians for contributions to this holy enterprise of saving "loyal" souls in the South, and giving over the degraded white race with the emancipated negroes chained upon them to the chances of the unenvoiced—remains to be seen. When we hear of a case we shall give it due notice.

The Theology of Salvation by works illustrated.

We see it reported in the dispatches and have no reason to question the correctness of the report, that the blasphemous Brownlow, in his Cleveland speech, discoursed of his future state as follows:

"If God, in His providence, should call me off, I have no fears of the consequences beyond the grave. If the books have been correctly kept in the upper world, as I have no doubt they have been, there will be a small balance in my favor."

We have never had occasion to find much fault with our Methodist brethren of the Border State and Southern churches, on the score of their doctrinal theories. So strongly have they pressed the great doctrine of the conversion of the soul by the regenerating power of God's Spirit, and the acceptance of the sinner for the alone sake of Jesus Christ the Lord our Righteousness, that we have felt it needless to waste time and strength on the erroneous philosophic theories which may now and then crop out in the speculations of certain men among them less zealous for experimental religion and the gospel of Christ than for the philosophic crotchets of Arminianism. The general tendencies among Southern Christians are rather to blending their views of practical religion while each party relaxes none of its zeal for its denominational interests.

A like tendency at the North works out an opposite effect on the purity and evangelical character of the Methodist gospel. Falling in with the general tendencies there toward the infidel Jacobin philanthropy, the worst features of the Arminian philosophy begin to crop out in what is esteemed the practical religion of the people. The difference to-day between Northern and Southern Methodism is practically far wider than between Southern Methodism and Presbyterianism. Brownlow whose blasphemies used to make good Methodists shudder, is now the representative man of Northern Methodism—at least of its "advanced thought." The Rev. Col. Moody of the several gradations follow on rapidly in the lead of his advanced thought. Already have they influence enough to secure for Brownlow, with all his blasphemies, a recognition in Methodist pulpits.

With the advance of Brownlowism obtrudes the semi-deistic idea of salvation by works as set forth in the above citation. Any Christian man perceives that this blaspheming infidel has never caught the first glimpse of the gospel way of salvation by grace through faith, and yet he is cheered from the "Amen corner," at such utterances as though he were some apostle from the Love feasts of Wesley himself.

Any shrewd worldly man, however, must find in this utterance of the gospel of salvation by works the most conclusive condemnation of it. If the balance on the books in heaven is even slightly in Brownlow's favor, it must arise from his having swindled the Divine government in some immense shoddy contract;

and no honest man would think a heaven with such sharpeners in it either a safe or desirable place. The religion of works never fails to work out this idea of gaining heaven by sharp trading with God, and its "good works" are all of the shoddy order. Nor does it fail to work out the self righteous cursing spirit of Brownlow. Its great representative man on the Cross nailed at Jesus and cursed—saying "Ah thou temple destroyer! if I am a thief I never pretended to be what I was not—never was disloyal to Caesar!"

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.  
"That was Then, and This is Now."  
What was Presbyterianism in 1837, now Presbyterianism in 1866.

In a preceding article, were produced a number of passages from Testimonies and Deliverances, found in the Assembly's record, exhibiting the views, as to church order, held by that type of men who led the cause of Old School Presbyterianism through its struggle, to its triumph. By them the principles of the constitution of our church were revered, and steadfastly maintained against powerful opposition, and under much reproach,—not only as the "soundest principles of civil and religious liberty," not only, as exhibiting "the rules by which God intends the affairs of His Church on earth to be conducted," but also because they afford a sure defense for those precious, though despised doctrines of grace, the pure transmission of which has been entrusted as a sacred duty to the church. If the "peculiarities" of our constitution were then the divinely appointed "ramparts" for the "defense" of the revealed doctrines of grace; what reason is there now, that these should be torn down, and the "doctrines and commandments of men" substituted in their stead? Has the church in thirty years advanced so far, that the provisions which her Lord has made for her equipment, and her protection by the way, are no longer sufficient, or adapted to her present exigencies? For ourselves we prefer the regime under which she started on her career; and expect to follow the fortunes of the constitution, as "in all essential features, in full accordance with the revealed will of God." As "the perversion of our doctrinal formularies, and the engraving of her principles and practices upon our church constitution [went] hand in hand" in that great struggle, at the close of which True Presbyterianism separated from itself that which was not a part of it; so it is again at this day, the perversion of the doctrines of a Spiritual Kingdom, has resuscitated, in order to the enforcement of the new dogmas, another mass of unconstitutional usurpations, resulting from an overstretch of power. It is intended, in this article, to cull from the record produced in the preceding one, the several distinctive principles of the constitution, contended for before the Assembly thirty years ago, and at length solemnly ratified by it.

1st. As to the essential character of the Assembly: It is a delegated body. Its members are the Commissioners of the Presbyteries. They are empowered or authorized by their several Presbyteries to act under a Commission, in joint Assembly. The authority of each individual constituent, is delegated to him: and the aggregate of such delegation, met after a certain prescribed manner, is the General Assembly. This is one sense, in which the General Assembly is the creature of the Presbyteries. It owes its actual being, to the power of the Presbyteries to delegate authority. The Assembly has no such power to delegate, because it is itself a delegated body. As such it cannot even perpetuate its existence. It holds its sessions for a few days, and is dissolved: and another Assembly is created in like manner. That they are ordained Presbyteries, is the qualification of its members to do their work; but the authority which they exercise is that of a commission.

2d. From this it follows, in the second place, that the Presbyteries are the fountains of power. By this nobody means, as is now so often absurdly stated, that power is original with the Presbyteries. Everybody of any sense and honesty, professing to be Presbyterian, is understood to believe, that power is vested in Presbyteries, by the Lord. And all the talk we now have about the doctrine of the Presbyteries as the fountains of power, being inconsistent with the Headship of Christ, is mere "jargon and trash," and "twaddle." The Presbyteries are the fountains of power, in that they are the Lord's depositories. And in their fiducial capacity, they are bound to exercise, and to provide for the exercise of the power committed to their trust, according to the will of Christ.

3d. "We believe that the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, is in all essential features, in full accordance with the revealed will of God." The Assembly of 1837 said, that this constitution is granted by the Presbyteries, the fountains of power, to the Synods, and the General Assembly. The Form of Government also says, "Before any overtures or regulations, proposed by the Assembly to be established as constitutional rules, shall be obligatory on the churches, it shall be necessary to transmit them to all the Presbyteries, and to receive the returns of at least a majority of them, in writing, approving thereof." The history of the adoption of the constitution, in its present form, is this: "In 1816, a committee of revision was appointed by the Assembly; which, in 1819, reported a revision of the Form. This was printed and circulated to obtain from Presbyteries and individuals such suggestions and alterations as might appear to them expedient. Amended by the aid of these suggestions, it was again reported to the Assembly in 1820; sent down to the Presbyteries, and by them adopted, reducing the constitution substantially to its present form." According to the theory which is so noisily advocated by certain New Lights of the present day, the approval of the Presbyteries is not needed, to give vitality to any "overtures" or "regulations" of the Assembly. If the powers of the Assembly are such as they claim; and the constitution has been given by the Assembly to the lower courts, as they say; the "Barrier Act" of chap. xii, sec. vi. is an anomaly in the system, and should be expunged. But in reality, the Presbyteries being the "fountains of power," "have reserved"—as the "Act and Testimony Convention" express it in their Memorial—"to themselves the exclusive power, of establishing any constitutional rule." The whole constitution is of binding force upon us, because it has been established by the Presbyteries; being judged and determined by them to be in conformity with the will of God. The Assembly can enact nothing which will affect or change its own essential character, without the approval of the Presbyteries; because the Presbyteries in establishing the constitution, have established the Assembly the Supreme Judiciary, as an integral part of that constitution. The Presbyteries, as Christ's fiduciaries, have caused the existence of the Synods and Assembly, thus providing according to the will of God, for the proper, and efficient exercise of the powers entrusted to them.

4th. This constitution is a "constitution of specific powers," distributed in the Session, Presbytery, Synod, and Assembly. The Assembly, as the supreme judiciary, is assigned its peculiar jurisdiction: and it has no right to exercise "any power not clearly delegated to it. That its powers are defined and prescribed is not derogatory to its character, but rather constitutive of its character. In no other sense, and for no other purpose, is it the Supreme Judiciary, than as these specific powers delegated to it, make it such.

5th. No powers not specifically granted, can be inferred and assumed by the Assembly. Being a delegated body, its powers do not inhere in it except by constitutional provision. This constitution being accepted by us as defining the will of God, when the Assembly transcends its specific powers, it usurps the prerogatives of Christ. One—who is set, by those who characterize themselves as the "adherents of the General Assembly," to enlighten the church at this juncture—recently, in the course of a long harangue, assumed to ridicule the doctrine that the powers of the Assembly are limited and prescribed by the constitution. And his argument was as preposterous as was the length of his infliction on the patience of the body whose attention he was endeavoring to engage. With distinguished gravity he informed us, that the Assembly had given the constitution to the Presbyteries and Churches; and was therefore itself above the constitution. All the power which the Lord had vested in His Church, was concentrated in the Assembly; the lower courts were the agents of the Assembly,—its hirelings in the vineyard of the Master. This very aptly illustrates the doctrine of the adherence, as against the "Act and Testimony," and the Assembly of 1837.

6th. The Assembly has no right to exercise its delegated powers, for purposes inconsistent with the design of its creation. When it assumes the functions of Synods and Presbyteries, and infers to itself powers co-ordinately with the lower courts, it transcends the purposes of its establishment. The assumption "that the duty of superintending the concerns of the whole church," invests the Assembly with all power ne-

cessary to accomplish that object, at her own discretion, tends to abolish the constitutional rights of Synods, Presbyteries and Church Sessions; to confound and contravene those original and essential principles of ecclesiastical government and order, which constitute and characterize the Presbyterian Church."

7th. "Whatever any Assembly may do, which is not authorized by the constitution to do, is not binding on any inferior judiciary, nor on any subsequent Assembly." So says the Assembly of 1837; and this occurs in such connection that it cannot be construed as a mere casual remark, incautiously worded; but is put forth as "the great principle on which the Assembly decided." And why is an unconstitutional act of the Assembly—notwithstanding its authority as the Supreme Judiciary—not binding? Because an unconstitutional requirement is of such immoral tendency, that it can impose no obligation; and besides, in matters of church order, the tendency is to the subversion of the Presbyterian Church, and of God's appointed defenses of a pure doctrine. This seventh principle is one of the first principles of Protestant Presbyterianism.

But only the Assembly has power to interpret the constitution, we are told. This simply amounts to a denial and surrender of the principle in question, and is one of the leading dogmas of Romanism. "EVERY MAN HAS NOT ONLY THE RIGHT TO JUDGE FOR HIMSELF ON ALL THESE POINTS, BUT IS BOUND BY HIS ALLEGIANCE TO GOD, TO CLAIM AND TO EXERCISE IT. \* \* \* No man is bound to obey an unconstitutional law. \* \* \* The deliverances of the Assembly, therefore, by common consent, bind the people and the lower courts, only when they are consistent with the constitution, and the scriptures, AND OF THAT CONSISTENCY EVERY MAN MAY, AND MUST JUDGE, AS HE HAS TO RENDER AN ACCOUNT TO GOD." Some men have recently come to regard Dr. Hodge's writings as a particular God-send of comfort. Let them apply to the tumult within, the unctious which his above opinion affords.

It is perfectly obvious that the principles which essentially constitute and characterize the Presbyterian Church, are precisely the principles which at this day are so obnoxious to the adherence; and which they are so sedulous endeavoring to asperse as the vile progeny of sin and schism. The "peculiarities" which thirty years ago, were necessary to the maintenance of pure doctrine, and the very existence of Presbyterianism, are now by strange mutation, the filth and the obscuring of the earth. But in explanation—perpetually satisfactory to their complacent mind—they would probably reply in oracular style—"That was then, and this is now." Yes: 'tis true:

"Men change with fortune, manners change with climes,  
Tenets with books, and principles with times."  
"JAY."

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

Pope Janeway's Scheme for the Evangelization of Kentucky and Missouri.

In the Home and Foreign Record for October, the gentleman who has lately refused compensation for services rendered to a poor missionary in Texas, because he could not pass an examination in the Assembly's (not Westminster) Catechism, while appealing to the churches for increased contributions, takes occasion in the following manner to slander the men who are trying to rescue the church from the reproach and ruin which such fanatics as he would bring upon her:

"The Border States, Kentucky and Missouri, torn by the violence of men, who under pleas of great spirituality are deceiving souls; men in sympathy with rebellion, and exasperated by its failure, disturbing the peace of churches, and treading under foot the immortal hopes of men. From these a remnant true at once to the country and the deliverances of the church, look to us to uphold them till the storm be past, to make up a support, which is torn from them by these dissensions; and though these others have neither men to send, nor means to support them if men could be found; the object seems to be, some strange joy in the ruin of churches and the scattering of the flocks. If our church is not prepared to surrender Kentucky and Missouri, then must the Board be enabled by her prayers and greatly increased contributions to do what all the principles of humanity and honor call upon us to do—sustain our true and loyal brethren till the true people of those States gather around and yield them their accustomed support. Men now require aid, who have never been on our list of missionaries, and shall we plead in vain for these men, so true, so heroic in opposition to popular passion and prejudice?"

So then the monied power is to be brought to bear in crushing out this testimony for the crown rights of Jesus our King! This Board in Philadelphia will use the sacred funds contributed by too confiding Christian men and women;—the offerings, representing, as they frequently do, painful self-denial,

and consecrated by earnest prayer;—the widow's mite, cast into the Lord's treasury with the timid hope that even the gift "of her penny" may do something for the spread of His blood-bought cause;—they will use this money for the purpose of forcing upon an unwilling people, ministers who have betrayed them, and have, by their declared purpose of upholding the Assembly, right or wrong, become odious to the majority of their congregations. Instead of appropriating it to the diffusion of the gospel in the destitute portions of our broad land, it is to be applied in paying men to uphold this new evangel of "Doctrine, Loyalty and Freedom," and preach to unwilling listeners the new doctrine, that the edicts of a General Assembly must be obeyed—right or wrong. For as it is certain that no minister of the gospel in our midst will have his "support torn from him by these dissensions" who has not pursued such a course that he ought not to remain with his disaffected people an hour after this fact is apparent; so it seems equally certain by this latest "bull" from the Papal chair in Philadelphia, that in the case of those who adhere to the Assembly—right or wrong—it will make no manner of difference whether their people support them or not;—they will be supported. If the next annual account of the Board of Domestic Missions could be audited by a committee who would ventilate the facts, what an outlay in Kentucky and Missouri would astonish those who had not before been aware that these benighted States were in such a condition of spiritual destitution!

We much mistake the church in Kentucky, if this new Domestic Mission will find favor, or the men who accept Pope Janeway's liberal support will wield an extensive influence in our midst. We should think that any ingenious mind among the Assembly's supporters would feel some scruples in accepting such aid, and would be troubled with fears lest some of that three hundred dollars, justly belonging to the poor, cheated Texas Missionary (whose sad case, as reported in the Free Christian Commonwealth of Sept. 13th, we all blushed with indignation over) might accidentally get mixed up with his salary, coming from Philadelphia. They ought to stipulate before receiving anything, that \$300 should first be set apart for the purchase of some "Potter's field," or turned over to Secretary Logan to help pay for that stolen Church in Charleston, or appropriated to some other equally laudable object connected with the infamy of the times. It certainly ought not to go into the treasury, to defile honest men's hands, seeing that, if not literally the "price of blood," it is the price of the once unstained good name of the Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions.

This Papal "bull" twists us with our poverty too—"These others have neither men to send, nor means to support them if men could be found." Do you hear that, true Presbyterians of Kentucky? We are too poor brethren, to support the gospel. We need "grants in aid" and men likewise, who can come with the Papal imprimatur upon their commissions, before we can be evangelized. Hear this gentleman in Philadelphia with the long purse, and contents at his command! Dismiss your fears, all ye whose "support has been torn from you by these dissensions!" Preach in peace, though to empty pews, for your "bread and meat" are sure. The old-fashioned method of "living by the gospel," in the willing support of a loving people, has been improved upon. A new era, under the auspices of the Board of Domestic Missions, dawns upon you. No longer will you wait upon the slow footsteps of some lagging deacon: no longer receive "produce" in part payment: no longer with "hope deferred," fret about making the "two ends meet." Here it comes; punctual as the mail. A draft on Philadelphia! Step over to the bank. Handle the crisp, new greenbacks. Retire to the family circle and rejoice—if you can. My friend, I pity you: from my soul, I pity you.

This poor Dr. Janeway does not seem to have a conception that the men who are battling against the encroachments of ecclesiastical tyranny are striving to keep undefiled consciences, and have through scorn and reproach steadily aimed to uphold the honor of the Saviour's name, when the vast majority of those in authority in the church were crying out "no King but Caesar!" No! his charity goes no further than this—"The Border States of Kentucky and Missouri, torn by the violence of men, who under pleas of great spirituality are deceiving souls; men in sympathy with rebellion, and exasperated by its failure, disturbing the peace of churches, and treading under foot the immortal hopes of men." It is pitiable to read such raving from one who has borne an honored name in the church. We peruse such sentences from Dr. Janeway with much of the feeling that would oppress us had we heard them shouted from his lips behind the bars of a cell in a lunatic asylum; and we turn away from this unholy language of coarse abuse with mingled horror and pity. Alas! where will not the radicalism, now rampant in our poor, distracted church, take a man, if once he yields to the truly Satanic spirit of its teachings?

We trust that sober men—not yet hopelessly committed to the new doctrines of Thomas, Stanton & Co., will pause and reflect when they read such venomous words as the Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions has sent forth in his last address to the churches. Can they blame the Declaration and Testimony men for refusing to collect funds to be squandered by such a madman?

I. F.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

A New Ecclesiastical Movement.

In pursuance of a previous notice, a number of persons met in the Academy at Dunlapville, Union county Ind., at 2 o'clock P. M., Saturday Sept. 29, 1866, to consider the propriety of organizing a Presbyterian church upon the basis of the Old standards, to the exclusion of all the Assemblies new doctrines touching political questions. After the reading of the third chapter of Second Peter, and prayer by Rev. J. J. Abernethy, the meeting was organized by calling Mr. Robert Logan to the chair, and appointing Dr. M. F. Leech, Secretary.

The object of the meeting being stated, and the necessity and importance of the steps contemplated in the call, examined and urged, the following paper was presented, received, and after thorough consideration, was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church (Old School) with which we have hitherto been connected—has, by various deliverances on political questions, for the past six years, through her highest court, the General Assembly, as well as through many Presbyteries and Synods, greatly transcended her sphere, which is only "to preach the word," and at the same time, by these deliverances, formed an unholy alliance with Caesar—as we are constrained to believe and

WHEREAS, In reply to the many and earnest efforts of those who have long waited and protested against these fatal departures from the old paths, and the truth as found in the Scriptures and our Confession of Faith, the General Assembly, at its last meeting in St. Louis, May 1866, formally declared that "The General Assembly has nothing in the matters aforesaid to change, nothing to modify, nothing to take back, nothing to amend in any way, shape, or form, whatever;" (see Minutes, page 115.) and further, in the same connection, boldly asserted both "the moral and ecclesiastical right of the Assembly to enact the same;" and not only so, but to make their words good, took immediate steps to curtail in the most summary manner, all who had ventured to oppose said unconstitutional and unscriptural deliverances and orders; and

WHEREAS, The apostasy of which we complain is so grievous that it ought not to be borne, and so established and persisted in, that no hopes for its removal may be reasonably entertained; and

WHEREAS, It is the duty of all who profess themselves followers of the Lord Jesus, to be united ecclesiastically, so far as possible, with those who hold with them, "the form of sound words," and a great privilege to enjoy the communion of those of "like precious faith;" and

WHEREAS, The Presbytery of Louisville, of which Rev. B. H. McCown is Moderator, and Rev. Robert Morrison, Stated Clerk, holds, as we believe, "the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints;"—has kept Christ's words, and has not denied his name!—Therefore

Resolved, That we, whose names are hereunto subscribed do, and hereby, petition said Presbytery of Louisville, to take such steps as they may deem best, to organize us into a church, to be under their care and control.

It was then ordered that the paper be presented to all who may desire to be included in the organization, (a declaration of faith, and a statement of their views, be also appointed tures. A committee was also appointed to arrange for procuring the services of a minister. The meeting then adjourned, sine die.

ROBERT LOGAN Chairman,  
M. F. LEECH, Secretary.

During the first four centuries, there were revolutions and rebellions against the civil government of Rome. There is no trace in history, that the Churches such, meddled or took any part in these civil contests. After the Church had departed from its original institution as a spiritual body, under Christ the Head, it meddled largely with the political affairs of the State—adopted the maxim, that everything which had a moral aspect, belonged to the jurisdiction of the Church, and found a moral aspect in almost everything. Upon this sweeping maxim, as Hallam calls it, as the foundation stone, was built up the mighty despotism of the Church of Rome. \*

It is said the agent in England, of Washington College, Virginia—the same that Gen. Lee presides over—reports donations to the amount of £50,000; the agent in France reports that he is doing very well, but gives no particulars, and the agent along the Mississippi river reports \$50,000, which is to be largely increased when the cotton crop is sold. All this, in addition to \$100,000, is now in hand.—[Lexington Gazette.]

treading under foot the immortal hopes of men." It is pitiable to read such raving from one who has borne an honored name in the church. We peruse such sentences from Dr. Janeway with much of the feeling that would oppress us had we heard them shouted from his lips behind the bars of a cell in a lunatic asylum; and we turn away from this unholy language of coarse abuse with mingled horror and pity. Alas! where will not the radicalism, now rampant in our poor, distracted church, take a man, if once he yields to the truly Satanic spirit of its teachings?

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The object of the meeting being stated, and the necessity and importance of the steps contemplated in the call, examined and urged, the following paper was presented, received, and after thorough consideration, was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church (Old School) with which we have hitherto been connected—has, by various deliverances on political questions, for the past six years, through her highest court, the General Assembly, as well as through many Presbyteries and Synods, greatly transcended her sphere, which is only "to preach the word," and at the same time, by these deliverances, formed an unholy alliance with Caesar—as we are constrained to believe and

WHEREAS, In reply to the many and earnest efforts of those who have long waited and protested against these fatal departures from the old paths, and the truth as found in the Scriptures and our Confession of Faith, the General Assembly, at its last meeting in St. Louis, May 1866, formally declared that "The General Assembly has nothing in the matters aforesaid to change, nothing to modify, nothing to take back, nothing to amend in any way, shape, or form, whatever;" (see Minutes, page 115.) and further, in the same connection, boldly asserted both "the moral and ecclesiastical right of the Assembly to enact the same;" and not only so, but to make their words good, took immediate steps to curtail in the most summary manner, all who had ventured to oppose said unconstitutional and unscriptural deliverances and orders; and

WHEREAS, The apostasy of which we complain is so grievous that it ought not to be borne, and so established and persisted in, that no hopes for its removal may be reasonably entertained; and

WHEREAS, It is the duty of all who profess themselves followers of the Lord Jesus, to be united ecclesiastically, so far as possible, with those who hold with them, "the form of sound words," and a great privilege to enjoy the communion of those of "like precious faith;" and

WHEREAS, The Presbytery of Louisville, of which Rev. B. H. McCown is Moderator, and Rev. Robert Morrison, Stated Clerk, holds, as we believe, "the faith as it was once delivered unto the saints;"—has kept Christ's words, and has not denied his name!—Therefore

Resolved, That we, whose names are hereunto subscribed do, and hereby, petition said Presbytery of Louisville, to take such steps as they may deem best, to organize us into a church, to be under their care and control.

It was then ordered that the paper be presented to all who may desire to be included in the organization, (a declaration of faith, and a statement of their views, be also appointed tures. A committee was also appointed to arrange for procuring the services of a minister. The meeting then adjourned, sine die.

ROBERT LOGAN Chairman,  
M. F. LEECH, Secretary.

During the first four centuries, there were revolutions and rebellions against the civil government of Rome. There is no trace in history, that the Churches such, meddled or took any part in these civil contests. After the Church had departed from its original institution as a spiritual body, under Christ the Head, it meddled largely with the political affairs of the State—adopted the maxim, that everything which had a moral aspect, belonged to the jurisdiction of the Church, and found a moral aspect in almost everything. Upon this sweeping maxim, as Hallam calls it, as the foundation stone, was built up the mighty despotism of the Church of Rome. \*

It is said the agent in England, of Washington College, Virginia—the same that Gen. Lee presides over—reports donations to the amount of £50,000; the agent in France reports that he is doing very well, but gives no particulars, and the agent along the Mississippi river reports \$50,000, which is to be largely increased when the cotton crop is sold. All this, in addition to \$100,000, is now in hand.—[Lexington Gazette.]



## Free Christian Commonwealth

Rev. STUART ROBINSON, Editor.

A. DAVIDSON & Co., Publishers.

LOUISVILLE, KY., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1866.

**Mr. McMaster's Rejoinder—the Presbyterian Platform for private members.**

We make room for the larger portion of Mr. McMaster's rejoinder to our article a few weeks since in correction of his charge against Dr. Dabney and ourselves, not simply because of his gentlemanly courtesy and candor, but because also the subject is one about which the public at large, as well as Mr. McMaster, seems to be ill informed. As the best method of accommodating the discussion to our very limited space, we present first the chief part of his article and then some brief notes upon it.

"The Rev. Stuart Robinson, D. D., well known as a Presbyterian clergyman, and, at present, editor of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*, of Louisville, replies to the remarks we lately made in our review of Dabney's life of Stonewall Jackson. The exceeding courtesy and gentleness of Dr. Stuart's reply at once disarm us. We did not expect these, and, certainly, it will not do for a Catholic to be surprised in manly charity by a Presbyterian. We feel sure, if Dr. Stuart treats the unworthy person of the *FREEMAN'S* Journal with so gently, and so generously, he would never say another bitter word against 'Popery,' if he would only study the authoritative doctrinal formularies of the Catholic Church one half as thoroughly as we have studied the foundations of Presbyterianism."

Our comment was on the omission of a remarkable passage in Mr. Dabney's account of how Stonewall Jackson became a Presbyterian. We asked Dr. Robinson, very pointedly, how he could leave out so significant an explanation, as contained in the omitted passages of the noble hero of the Shenandoah, did, with qualifications, adopt Presbyterianism—how he became a Presbyterian while rejecting the fundamental dogmas of Calvinism—justification by faith only, and that men were 'elected' to eternal salvation without any regard to their good works. Dr. Robinson answers us that, for the bulk of his Presbyterian readers, it is well known that 'private members of the Presbyterian Church are not required to accept the Confession of Faith,' and that the passage was omitted simply for the sake of brevity.

We accept the explanation—coming from a gallant and fearless gentleman. We regret the sharpness of our manner in asking why the passage was suppressed. It did not hurt him, we thought. Robinson contended the concession to Stonewall Jackson as disaffiliating, and when, frankly, and with apology, withdrew that suggestion, and everything else that can be construed into any want, on our part, of a sincere and great respect for Dr. Stuart Robinson generally.

Dr. Robinson is misinformed in regard to our having been educated in the sect known as 'Seceders.' On the contrary, we were trained in the 'old, genuine, original' of Presbyterianism! Our training was in the fierce school of Calvin, Bona, and Turretin, of Knox and Melville. From that Presbyterianism, all others differing from it, were mere detentions. The 'Seceders' went out from it, and the 'Burghers,' and the 'Anti-Burghers,' and the 'Associate Reformed,' and the 'Confessional' of Scotland, and last and weakest of all, the *American Presbyterians*! It is a little singular that, in another editorial article in this same number of Dr. Robinson's *Free Christian Commonwealth*, we have a corroboration of our charge that *American* Presbyterianism was the weakest of all the seceders from original Presbyterianism.

In the tender years of childhood—at an age when few children bother their heads with such grave matters, it was our delight, and our recreation, to puzzle out these questions and vexations, and dear to us, before 1834, when we were a very young boy, left this *ancient* Presbyterianism for the (excuse us Dr. Robinson!) *shoddy American Presbyterianism*! At that young age, with it, is certain very rare advantage—due to the presence of a wonderful personal virtues, and of very high cultivation—we took the point of departure that ended in making us a Roman Catholic. We resolved to read back and find the origin of what was inculcated on us for truth! We were pointed to Calvin, and Bona, and Turretin. We read them, and they pointed us to the Catholic Church, from which they had seceded!

But this is much more of the *personal* than we ever, at any time, intended to have written of ourself. It is, at once, too much, and too good, to be true.

It is enough for us to have said to Dr. Robinson that he is mistaken in thinking we were bred in the 'narrow and fierce species of the genus Presbyterianism,' called 'Seceders.' We were bred in the first of all Presbyterian creeds, in that which, in 1647, the 'General Assembly' at Edinburgh approved the 'Westminster Confession of Faith,' framed in preceding years. In that which approved 'the larger and shorter catechisms'—all of which we know how to recite to this day. Also, the 'Shorter Catechism' (and, hypothetically, we were early taught, and still believe,) by various political orders, at various times, from 1580 to 1661. Also 'the Solemn League and Covenant,' entered into by the three kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, ratified and renewed 'with an acknowledgement of sins' against it, and all such sanctions, at various times, and by the pious Charles II., and all like godly folk.

These are the foundations of Presbyterianism. They are so familiar to us that we will freely write for Dr. Robinson's journal a series of papers, if he will permit us, giving a very rare and thorough analysis of Presbyterianism—its origins, development and final decay. But he ought to retract the accusation that we were trained a *Seceder*. We were trained a *Seceder*. The oldest of all Presbyterian stocks, and so soon as we found it was a seceder from the Church Christ established, with the promise 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,' we went and did our best to repair what our forefathers had badly done in seceding from it.

And now we ask a few words with Dr. Stuart Robinson, as a shining light in the Presbyterian firmament, in regard to the loose doctrine he holds as to church membership in his communion. He says 'every Presbyterian has the right to be a member of the Presbyterian Church, are not required to subscribe to the Confession of Faith.'

We will own that in appealing as we did to Dr. Stuart Robinson, besides the politeness of his writings, we were somewhat inclined, from his very name, to suppose he held to the *old Scotch* Presbyterianism. Without the passage we have quoted from his paper, above, of the 'leaving of Presbyterianism with the false doctrine of the *traveller's* expediency policy,' &c., of Puritanism, we expected him to hold up the stiff standard of doctrinal uniformity.

It so happened, on the day Dr. Robinson's paper, from which we have quoted, was received, two highly educated gentlemen were together with us, in our sanctum. Both of them were bred Presbyterians, and graduated at the Miami University, under the Presidency of Dr. E. D. McMaster. We cannot think it is to their intellectual disparagement that, discarding Calvinism, they are both aloft in religious matters. But, each of them is perfectly conversant with the formulas of the Presbyterian 'Confession of Faith,' and with the 'Catechisms, Larger and Shorter.'

They were, both, astounded at Dr. Robinson's declaration that a 'private member of the Presbyterian Church was not required to accept the Confession of Faith!' They thought otherwise. We, certainly, thought otherwise. We yield gracefully to Dr. Robinson's better knowledge of what *modern* Presbyterianism at this day requires! We know nothing about it, but it does seem strange to us that one can be received to the communion of a society, while denying fundamental dogmas of its faith! It looks to us, like 'the false doctrine, the treacherous expediency policy,' &c., of New Englandism—as Dr. Stuart says in his last paper!

We must not close this article without drawing Dr. Robinson's attention to what is plainly, in terms of the schools, an *ignorantia elenchii*. He says, properly, that uneducated persons are not to be expected to post themselves, as a term of communion, in 'a system of Theology!' Opportunity is to be waited for this! But, the question is as follows: Can you admit, honestly, to your communion, a man who rejects a fundamental article of your belief? Catholics cannot. How can any man, if he is a Catholic in one point, be guilty of all? No Catholic Priest can receive to Catholic communion a man that declares his disbelief in the spotless conception of the Mother of God, or in the value of prayers to the Saints, or in any other dogma of Catholic Faith!

How, then, is it possible for Presbyterians, if they profess to be the Church of Christ, to admit to communion a man denying the very fundamental doctrine of their Confession—eternally decreed damnation or salvation irrespective of works, or the worthlessness of good works? Stonewall Jackson rejected this fundamental of Presbyterianism! How, then, could he be received into the Presbyterian Church? We own we cannot understand it!

On the several points of this article we remark:

1. The simple issue raised with Mr. McMaster, was not whether Presbyterians are consistent or inconsistent, wise or unwise, in not requiring subscription to their doctrinal ecclesiastical and ritual symbols on the part of private members; but simply whether Dr. White in the first instance, had dealt honestly with Gen. Jackson and Dr. Dabney after him had truly expounded Presbyterian usage, and when, after Dr. D. had with a design to cover up a dishonesty, omitted this passage in citing from the biography. In reference to this—the original issue, Mr. McMaster like a true man makes to us personally, the *amende*. And we can assure Mr. McMaster that if he knew Dr. Dabney as well as we do, however much he might dislike his intense Protestantism, he would never have suggested the idea that Dr. Dabney would 'shun to declare the whole counsel of God' to serve a purpose. Mr. McMaster himself has not shown a more fearless, uncompromising spirit in maintaining either his political opinions or his theological views, than that which has distinguished Dr. Dabney through his whole public career. Nor had Mr. McMaster known the venerable Dr. White as we do would he ever, for a moment, have entertained the suspicion that Dr. White would widen the door of his church for the special purpose of admitting Gen. Jackson or any body else. Besides, at this time Gen. Jackson was unknown save as a brave Lieutenant, and a not very popular professor in a military school.

2. Now as to the fact that our Presbyterian churches in the United States do not require of private members adherence to the Confession of Faith, as do some other American sections of the Scotch Church; while all of them hold substantially the original Westminster symbols, Mr. McMaster need not rely upon the recollections of his friends of Miami University. A simple reference to two of the American modifications of the Scottish Directory for worship will settle that matter.

Says the General Assembly's Directory (Chap. 9) 'Those who are to be admitted to sealing ordinances (that is to full communion in the Church) "shall be examined as to their knowledge and piety."

"Children born within the pale of the visible church \* \* \* are to be taught to read and repeat the Catechism, the Apostles' creed and the Lord's Prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they come to years of discretion, if they be free from scandal and appear sober and steady, and to have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, they ought to be informed it is their duty and their privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."

Of unbaptized persons it is said at the same place: "They shall after giving satisfaction with respect to their knowledge and piety make a public profession of their faith and thereupon be baptized."

Here now is the whole rule on the subject, under which Dr. White acted in the case of Gen. Jackson. The rule in the Book of the Associate Reformed Church, which we designated—by the popular title applied to them in our boyhood—as the 'old seceders,' (we meant to raise no question as to whether they are in fact a 'secession' or a true succession of the ancient Scottish Church principles—for, bating some of their erroneous semi-Theocratic notions, we judge

the secessions from the Church of Scotland to be the purer and more earnest of the two)—the rule of this Directory, (Sec. 34 'of the admission of members') declares:

"Applicants shall be examined concerning their knowledge, principles and experience, by the minister."

This is in substance the same with the rule of the General Assembly's Directory as above quoted. But the *Adopting act* of the Associate Reformed Synod at Greencastle, Pa., May 31st, 1799, declares further:

"Agreeably hereto, the terms on which any person or persons, shall be admitted as a member or members of this church, are, a profession of faith in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; together with an approbation of the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Form of Church Government and Directories for worship as therein received; a holy life and conversation &c."

It was under this phase of Presbyterianism or some similar adopting order superinduced upon the Westminster Directory, that we supposed Mr. McMaster had been educated when we called him a 'seceder.' We need not retract therefore, as he requests, beyond explaining our use of the term as the popular designation of a very rigid sort of Presbyterians analogous to the term 'Iron-sides' as applied to certain Baptists. Presbyterian bodies generally in this country accept the same 'old original' Westminster symbols—modifying only the article of the Civil Magistrate.

3. It will be seen, moreover, on reference to Dabney's Life of Jackson, (page 84-85) that the question is not a question of receiving one who disbelieves and 'rejects a fundamental article of belief.' The statement is that Gen. Jackson, had 'difficulty with'—'objected to' the doctrine of God's sovereign purpose. That a friend said to him 'jocularly' he ought to be a Methodist. That his extreme tenderness of conscience made him fear he had professed more than he believed &c. There was no profession of disbelief—no rejection; and the incident is mentioned only to set off more strongly Jackson's clear and full acceptance of the Calvinistic theory afterward. Dr. White was satisfied with 'his knowledge and piety' notwithstanding his difficulties on that subject.

4. As to Mr. McMaster's suggestion of his qualifications to write for us articles on Presbyterianism, he will perceive that we are cramped into a very small space, with a great deal to put in on controversial subjects much nearer home to us. Should this effort of our poverty, to keep open a channel of utterance for the friends of civil and religious liberty, against the efforts of tyrannical radicalism to establish, at whatever cost an 'exotic' here in Kentucky in the interest of despotism—should this ever result in our reaching the ample dimensions of the *Freeman's Journal*, we should take great pleasure in giving Mr. McMaster a place for such essays accompanied with free notes thereon by ourselves. A reference to our labors in the 'Critic' twelve years ago, and an examination of our library—with an extensive Papal Library, embosomed in it—as a little *imperium in imperio*—would suggest to Mr. McMaster that perhaps we may have 'studied the authoritative formulas of the Catholic Church' somewhat thoroughly. We are rustier perhaps, than when we had occasion to deal with the propositions of Dr. Brownson and Archbishop Hughes 'twelve years ago. For since we have a Presbyterian Pope set up in Philadelphia, we have been obliged to turn attention off from the old man at Rome.

But that the Calvinistic system of Theology and Church Government has been corrupted somewhat by the leaven of New Englandism does not in the least affect our faith in it. Had Mr. McMaster waited till maturer years had taught him how to be an Eclectic, and separate the true system from the errors which their circumstances led his forefathers, oppressed, persecuted, and enfolded by usurping tyrants and avaricious nobles, to mingle with their great truths, and from the corruptions with which their degenerate sons had permeated their system, we doubt not he would have today been found side by side with us in the great struggle for theological truth, as well as in the struggle for civil and religious liberty.

5. As to the chief objection of Mr. McMaster to our statement of the Presbyterian usage in receiving members, it has no force unless we assume the correctness of the Roman Catholic as against the Protestant Evangelical conception of Christian faith. His notion of faith is that of accepting dogmas, as an act of obedience to Church authority; our conception of faith is that of a simple trust in a personal Saviour. His theory of religion calls upon men to believe as set forth by the Church, our theory to believe a Christ as set forth in the Scriptures of God. On our view of the matter, while no one who positively rejects any teaching of the word of God is to be received in the Church, yet no difficulty about doctrine that does not prevent a man from accepting in his

heart the Lord Jesus Christ, and resting upon his righteousness alone for salvation, should be a bar to his entering into the communion of saints.

6. We have been deeply interested in Mr. McMaster's brief and modest statement of his personal religious history, of which we knew nothing before beyond the fact that he had been reared a Presbyterian of the strictest sect. We do not even now know precisely the degree of relationship between him and his distinguished namesake in the Presbyterian Church. When we say, however, that we have ever entertained the greatest respect for the Presbyterian Doctor McMaster, as a man of genius, a profound theologian, a bold, fearless, honest man, and a high gentleman—notwithstanding all his strange vagaries as an abolitionist, nobody who knows us will longer wonder, that we should be able to entertain a like respect for the New York kinsman as a man of fine genius, manly courage, true honor and high principle, in spite of the fact that he has fallen into the errors of Rome. We can only regret that so glorious a cause as that in which his forefathers suffered, should have lost the services of a son who has shown so much of their indomitable martyr spirit.

**Presbyterial Joking.**  
The Presbyterial of Luzerne at its meeting, Sept. 17th-19th, 'adopted with entire and cordial unanimity,' the history says, the report of their committee on the minutes of the Assembly, containing the following:  
"In so far as the deliverances of the General Assembly, complained of by the Louisville Presbytery, are simply declarative of the views of the Assembly on the rebellion and the war, they must stand, and, while they pray for the peace, purity, and unity of the Church, will rejoice to see the highest court of the Church ever exercise the authority given it by the constitution, to maintain that unity, by the 'suppressing of schismatical divisions,' and the excommunicating of those who are contumacious."

Of course the decision of such a Presbytery that the deliverances of the Assembly must stand, settles the question with the Louisville pulpits, and ought to put an end to all fears about the Assembly on the part of its friends.—But when it comes to the witty and withering sarcasm of such a body in applying the 'so-called' prefix, when speaking of the Presbyterians as the 'fountains of power,' we might suppose that the grey hairs of the living heroes of the revolution of 1834-7, such as Drs. Geo. Junkin and Engles, and Hon. Samuel C. Anderson, must stand on end, and the bones of the dead heroes, such as Winchester and Dr. Green, must rattle in their coffins at the sharp twang of the satirical lash!

A still sadder specimen of Presbyterial joke, however, we find in the same journal from which we culled the foregoing. It is the report of the proceedings on the same subject, of our neighbors of the New Albany Presbytery. That body reports as follows:

"Presbytery having heard the report of its Commissioners, it is hereby  
"Resolved, 1. That their diligence and fidelity be approved.  
"Resolved, 2. That we cordially approve the action of the Assembly in regard to the 'so-called' prefix, and that the position taken be maintained.  
"Resolved, 3. That we sympathize with those brethren who are struggling to maintain the Church in its integrity against those who, though they may not rebellion to its authority and discipline.  
"Resolved, 4. That in approving the action of the Assembly, the inference is clear that our ministers and churches can have no official intercourse with them, nor they with us.  
"The next stated meeting will be at Utica, Indiana, April 19th, 1867, at seven o'clock, P. M. J. P. SAFFORD, S. C."

Now, at the risk of being thought very reckless in making light of so terrible an infraction as being cut off from official intercourse with the metropolitan Churches and bishops of New Albany, Jeffersonville, Owen Creek, Greencastle, Henryville, &c., we cannot repress a smile at such a joke as excommunication from 'official intercourse' with the distinguished Commissioner to the Assembly whose name is signed to this report, as stated clerk, and who doubtless was the *magna pars* in the issuing of this great bull of excommunication. For we have a very distinct recollection of hearing some friends at St. Louis making catalogue of the remarkable number of bankrupts, ecclesiastical and moral, who figured, or made desperate efforts to figure, as the prominent men of the Radical movement there; and quite conspicuously in the list, figured the New Albany Doctor, though the extemporized 'mercantile agency's' report was not more recent than the date of the transfer of the great light from Piqua, Ohio, to New Albany. But these are the days of shoddy regulations, as well as of shoddy fortunes of remarkably rapid growth. And quietly submitting to the fortunes of war, no doubt our good friends and neighbors, Wilson, Hill, McPeeters, McCown, &c., will, like ourselves, bear with the spirit of martyrs, the sad reverse of having to stand with the snobs in the little suburban village of Louisville, and see with many a loving desire, our distinguished

neighbors, McKee, McMillan, Young and Valentine, passing up to the Metropolitan Sees of New Albany, Jeffersonville, Owen Creek, Henryville, to receive the sympathizing *pattings*, the patronizing smiles, and the high honors 'of official intercourse' with Dr. Safford & Co. Our favored rivals have only now to 'mind their steps'—'hold up your head, speak loud and plain'—as our Webster's spelling book used so kindly to hint to us, and Dr. Safford and his Presbytery will make men of them yet.

It was very kind and considerate in the great man to give us the benefit of his superior logical power, and point out to us 'the clear inference' from his premise, and thereby save us the mortification, perhaps, of being snubbed in the blind eagerness of our desire to rush into 'official intercourse' with the dignitaries of New Albany, Owen Creek, &c. We shall endeavor to show our appreciation of this kindness, by struggling against the natural desire for distinction, and remaining quietly within our little suburban village of Louisville.

**Light Shining in the Darkness.**

A 'Minority man' in the *Presbyterian* of Oct. 6th professes to show that the doctrine asserted by the minority of the last Assembly was distinctly recognized in the New School controversy by the Old School party. The writer seems to be one of the older men who can testify from memory of acts in which he bore a part. He has evidently not been a reader of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*, for it will be perceived that he repeats chiefly what has been said in our columns. But his argument is forcibly put and will interest our readers as an independent witness in confirmation of what we have said on the subject. We copy his first essay nearly entire:

*Minority Editors:* If the greatness of a task may be inferred from the efforts put forth to accomplish it, the sponsors of the late General Assembly have found themselves engaged in a work of considerable difficulty. Not to look beyond the *Presbyterian*, you have, I think, some four or five correspondents, each of whom has occupied four or five columns in attempting to establish the *consolidation* theory of our system. Every week we are treated to elaborate arguments, resting, for the most part, upon foreign authorities, designed to show that our General Assembly would seem to defy all dissent. With those who are in dissent, we exercise any and all the functions of the inferior judicatories. These dissertations are not unfrequently garnished with sharp censures upon the minority of the last Assembly, and those who concur with them in sentiment, as men who have repudiated the settled doctrine of the Church, and 'adopted the identical views maintained by the New School party in our controversy with them.' The *Princeton Review*, while justifying the minority in their sentiment, by declaring that the acts of the Assembly were 'uncalled for,' 'needlessly severe,' 'adapted to foment strife and division,' and 'to put in jeopardy important interests,' affirms the above theory with a confidence which would seem to defy all dissent. With those who do not examine for themselves, these voluminous and plausible authorities will no doubt be conclusive. But, happily, there are men living who can remember the time when this doctrine met with no favour in our communion; and who are too good to allow dissent from the Church, to stand by without remonstrance, and see it incorporated with its polity. The danger of this has become imminent, by reason of the sanction given to the theory in question by the last two Assemblies. Therefore, respect may be due to the formal deliverances of our Supreme Judiciary, no one will deny that, like other Synods and Councils, the Assembly may err, and often has erred. Nor will there be any dissent from those two propositions, (1.) That 'an unconstitutional act is one which is not in accordance with the constitution of the Church, and is, therefore, void ab initio.' And (2.) That it is the right and duty of our ministers and people to use all proper means to bring about a repeal of such acts of our judicatories as they believe to be unwise and oppressive, even though they may not challenge their constitutionality.

The issues, then, before the Church, are these:—(1.) Were the acts of the late General Assembly warranted by the Constitution? And (2.) Were they wise and just, and suited to the condition of the Church? As both issues, the majority of the Assembly affirmed, and the minority denied. The *Princeton Review* affirms as to the first, and denies as to the second. Very few of the newspaper writers on the side of the majority, grapple in applying their principles with the real difficulties involved in the proceedings at St. Louis, as will be clearly shown before this discussion is completed. Had they even succeeded in proving the constitutionality of those proceedings, the still harder task would remain of vindicating their wisdom and equity.

The argument of the *Repository* and other writers is this: All church power is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and resides in the whole body of believers. Therefore, inasmuch as the several judicatories are representative bodies, they are clothed with the same power which pertains to their respective constituencies; the session has all the power of the congregation; and the General Assembly all the power which inheres in the entire Church. We admit the premises, and deny the conclusion. Whether the General Assembly of any particular denomination is invested with the plenary power of the denomination, and can exercise all the functions of the inferior courts, depends altogether upon the Constitution the Church may have adopted. Take an analogous case. All political power is derived from the Lord Jesus Christ, and resides in the body of the people. Does it follow that the Legislature of a State may assume all the powers and functions of the several municipal and private corporations within its territorial area? And especially under a government like ours, can the national Legislature do whatever the State, county, and city authorities may do? The government might have been organized upon this principle; but it was not. Neither was our Church organized upon this principle. In both cases the Constitutions actually adopted provide for a certain distribution of these various powers and duties; and these Constitutions are as binding upon the supreme as upon the subordinate legislatures. This will be made clear to demonstration, when it is considered that the Presbyteries might now abide indefinitely the powers of the General Assembly. This has been

repeatedly proposed by some of the wisest men of the Church. These changes might include prohibitory clauses, forbidding the General Assembly to exercise certain of the powers it now has. Would such a Constitution be invalid? And if not, what becomes of the theory that to the General Assembly belong, *ex necessitate rei*, all the prerogatives and functions of the lower courts? The Assembly, it is manifest, is invested with the powers assigned to by the Constitution—no more, no less. By that compact we are all bound. To attempt to supersede it by the dictum that the supreme judicatory, simply because it is supreme, may assume, *men sua discretion*, all the powers of the other courts, is to substitute the will of the majority for a well-defined, written charter. Constitutions are made for the protection of the weak against the strong. This theory turns our Constitution into a wall of sand.

This argument from 'the nature of Church power' is buttressed by others even more fallacious, derived from the history of the Church of Scotland. A false and deceptive analogy. To what purpose are the passages cited in every quarter from Scotch authors? They prove that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has this right of eminent jurisdiction. Of course it has. It had it from the beginning. It is interwoven with its whole Constitution and history. What is that to us? The Church of Scotland began with a General Assembly, from which its Presbyteries derived their being. Our Church began with a Presbytery. In process of time the Presbyteries created a General Assembly, and agreed among themselves as to the powers which they would reserve to themselves. He would be a bold man who should deny the proposition just laid down, that the Presbyteries can now, at their option, augment or abridge the powers thus assigned to the Assembly. And yet we are referred to the Church of Scotland, and gravely told that our Assembly came into being like Minerva, full armed; that its very birth carried with it, all and more than all the attributes and rights of the constitutions that created it—the entire power, in fact, inherent in the whole body of our communion. Let us be consistent, then, England has no written Constitution, and needs none; for its Parliament is omnipotent. Let us put our Constitution in the fire.

From the Church of Scotland these brethren turn to the records of our New School controversy. They have shown that eminent men in the Assembly of 1837 maintained the competency of the body to do what was actually done in respect to the New School Synods—widely different case from that presented at St. Louis. But since the prime question before that Assembly was, 'What is the true theory of our Constitution? what powers pertain to the General Assembly?' why do they not quote and expound, not particular speeches, but the well-weighted, official deliverance of the entire majority on this fundamental subject? Here it is:—'1. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, like that of our National Union, is a Constitution of specific powers granted by the Presbyteries, the fountains of power, to the Synods and the General Assembly. 2. No powers not specifically granted can lawfully be inferred and assumed by the General Assembly, but only such as are indispensably necessary to carry into effect those specifically granted.' One of the names appended to this paper is that of Samuel C. Anderson, Esq., of Virginia. Every one who was present will remember that his great speech on the constitutional question was one of the most powerful and pronounced speeches of the session; and that it did more to decide the wavering minds in the house than any other. It may do to content the authority of this profound jurist now. In those days he was thought by the Greens, the Alexanders, the Witherspoons, and the Elliots of the Church to know something of our Constitution.

**The Vicious Principle in the Theories of Modern Religious Speculation.**

In the preface to his 4th volume recently issued by the Carters, Dr. Merle D'Aubigne suggests the following very pointed hint to the speculative schools of Europe:

'The greatest imaginable absurdity,' says one of the eminent philosophers and noble minds of our epoch, M. Jouffroy 'would be the assertion that this present life is everything, and that there is nothing after it. I know of no greater or in any branch of science.' Might there not, however, be another absurdity worthy of being placed by its side? The same philosopher says that, so far as regards our state after this life, 'science and philosophy have not, after two thousand years, arrived at a single accepted result.' Consequently, by the side of the absurdity which M. Jouffroy has pointed out, we confidently place another, as the second of 'the greatest imaginable absurdities,' namely, that which consists in believing, after two thousand years of barren labors, that there is another way besides Christianity to know and possess the life invisible and eternal. The essential fact of the history of religion 'and the history of the world: *God manifest in the flesh*, is the ray from heaven which reveals that life to us, and procures it for us. We know what a wind of incredulity has scattered over barren sands many noble souls who aspire to something better, and for whom Christ has opened the gates of eternity; but let us hope that their fall will be only temporary, and that many enlightened men on high, turning their eyes away from the desert which surrounds them and lifting them towards heaven, will exclaim: *I will arise and go to my Father.*

We must, as Jouffroy says, 'recommence our investigations,' but 'first of all,' he adds, we must confess the secret vice which has hitherto rendered all our exertions powerless. That secret vice consists in considering the question in an intellectual and theoretical point of view only, while it is absolutely necessary to grapple with it in a practical way, and to make it an individual fact. The matter under discussion belongs to the domain of humanity, not of philosophy. It does not regard the understanding alone, but the conscience, the will, the heart, and the life. The real vice consists in our not recognizing, within us, the evil that separates us from God, and, without us, the Savior who leads us to Him. The royal road to learn and possess life invisible and eternal is the knowledge and possession of that Son of Man, of that Son of God, who said with authority: *I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER BUT BY ME.*

**D'Aubigne's Estimate of the Origin and Peculiarities of the English Reformation.**

In the opening of his 4th volume, D'Aubigne presents the following rather striking view of the influences which combined to bring about and give tone to the Reformation in England:

While France, flattered by Rome calling her its eldest daughter, desired even when reforming her doctrine to preserve union with the papacy; the Anglo-Saxon race, jealous of their liberties, desired to form a Church at once national and independent, yet remaining faithful to the doctrines of Catholicism. Henry VIII. is the personification of that tendency, which did not disappear with him, and of which it would not be difficult to discover traces even in later days.

Other elements calculated to produce a better reformation existed at that time in England. The Holy Scriptures, translated, studied, circulated, and preached since the fourteenth century by Wickliffe and his disciples, became in the sixteenth century, by the publication of Erasmus of Testament, and the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale, the powerful instrument of a real evangelical revival, and created the scriptural reformation.

These early developments did not proceed from Calvin,—he was too young at that time; but Tyndale, Fryth, Latimer, and other evangelists of the reign of Henry VIII., taught by the same Word as the reformer of Geneva, were his brethren and his precursors. Somewhat later, his books and his letters to Edward VI., to the regent, to the primate, to Sir W. Cecil and others, exercised an indisputable influence over the reformation of England. We find in those letters proofs of the esteem which the most intelligent persons of the kingdom felt for that simple and strong man, whom even non-protestant voices in France have declared to be 'the greatest Christian of his age.'

A religious reformation may be of two kinds: internal or evangelical, external or legal. The evangelical reformation began at Oxford and Cambridge almost at the same time as in Germany. The legal reformation was making a beginning at Westminster and Whitehall. Students, priests, and laymen, moved by inspiration from on high, had inaugurated the first; Henry VIII. and his parliament were about to inaugurate the second, with hands occasionally somewhat rough. England began with the spiritual reformation, but the other had its motives too. Those who are charmed by the reformation of Germany sometimes affect contempt for that of England. 'A king impelled by his passions was its author,' they say. We have placed the scriptural part first; but we confess that for it to lay hold upon the people in the sixteenth century, it was necessary, as the prophet declared, that kings should be its nursing fathers, and queens its nursing mothers. If divers reforms were necessary, if by the side of German cordiality, Swiss simplicity, and other characteristics, God willed to found a protestantism possessing a strong hand and outstretched arm; if a nation was to exist which with great freedom and power should carry the Gospel to the ends of the world, special tools were required to form that robust organization, and the leaders of the people—the commons, lords, and king—were each to play their part.—France had nothing like this: both princes and parliaments opposed the reform; and thence partly arises the difference between these two great nations. For France had in Calvin a mightier reformer than any of those whom England possessed. But let us not forget that we are speaking of the sixteenth century. Since then the work has advanced; important changes have been wrought in Christendom; political society is growing daily more distinct from religious society, and more independent; and we willingly say with Pascal, 'Glorious is the state of the Church when it is supported by God alone!'

Two opposing elements—the reforming liberalism of the people, and the almost absolute power of the king—combined in England to accomplish the legal reformation. In that singular island these two rival forces were often seen acting together; the liberalism of the nation gaining certain victories, the despotism of the prince gaining others; king and people agreeing to make mutual concessions. In the midst of these compromises, the little evangelical flock, which had no voice in such matters, religiously preserved the treasure entrusted to it: the word of God, truth, liberty, and Christian virtue. From all these elements sprang the Church of England. A strange church some call it. Strange indeed, for there is none which corresponds so imperfectly with theory with the ideal of the church; and, perhaps, none whose members work out with more power and grandeur the ends for which Christ has formed his kingdom.

GERMANY.—Rev. T. V. MOORE, D. D., in a letter from the Wartburg to the *Central Presbyterian*, writes: 'It is exceedingly difficult to say what the exact religious condition of the German mind now is, for it has so few fixed elements. Rationalism—the perverse ingenuity that was applied to Scripture to make it teach heresy and infidelity—has died out greatly, but it is because these men really do not care what Scripture teaches enough to apply this ingenuity to it. Pantheism, which is nothing in many minds but a cold and dreamy mist of materialistic Atheism, is the belief of a sadly large number of educated Germans. It is true that there are a great many earnest evangelized Christians; but they are in a minority, especially in the Universities, which control the active mind of Germany. And I find among the evangelicals a great deal of Millenarianism; and the second coming of Christ is the great feature of the gospel that swallows up all others with it.'

**PRAYER.**—Do not say you cannot pray, because you cannot speak much, or well, or long. Prayer is wrestling with God; the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it. If by the means of this strength, thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailor. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotence.







# Free Christian Commonwealth

## REVIEWS.

A COMMENTARY ON THE SECOND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER, By John T. Demarest, D. D., minister of the Reformed Dutch Church, Passaic, N. J. New York, A. Loyd, 115 Nassau St.

We have not yet had time to give this volume though only a thin Octavo, of two hundred and twenty-five beautifully printed pages—that careful examination which such a book deserves before giving an opinion for or against it. Yet we feel free to say that so far as we have examined the book it has impressed us as an important critical disquisition on an important subject. Good commentaries on the Epistles of Peter—especially on 2d Peter—are somewhat scarce. Dr. Demarest has in our judgment, done a valuable service for students of the Bible in furnishing them, within so small a compass, so much real learning, so fine a model of critical discussion, and so valuable a help, every way, in getting at the mind of the spirit in this portion of the divine word. Of his second advent views we express no opinion. But whether concurring with these views or not the student of this epistle will find much to thank Dr. Demarest for in his sound, scholarly expositions of the text.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE IN THE TIME OF CALVIN. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, D.D. Vol. 4th. England, Geneva, France, Germany, and Italy. New York: Robt. Carter & Bros. 1866.

Of this volume, Book 6th, embracing more than one third of the whole, may be considered the continuation of the author's 5th vol. of the "History of the Reformation in the 16th Century," describing the beginning of the Reformation in England. A like portion of the Volume is devoted to the events at Geneva in 1535-5. Dr. D'Aubigne's peculiar characteristics as a historian, are too well known to need any criticism from us. We shall in another column extract for our readers an interesting specimen of the author's method in his view of the original causes of the English Reformation; and also his hint in the preface to the profound philosophers in search of a religion. The Book is for sale by Mr. Davidson, on Third st.

HEAVEN OPENED.—A selection from the Correspondence of Mrs. Mary Winslow, Edited by her Son, Robt. Carter & Bros., 530 Broadway, New York.

We have received, and partially read this beautiful volume—gotten up in the best style of Ballantyne & Co., Edinburgh. And the book is well worthy the honor of publication in such a style. Since the *Cardiphonia*, the Letters of Rutherford and the Diaries of Brainard and Henry Martyn, we have met with nothing inspired, so beautifully spiritual as this collection of excerpts from the letters of this very remarkable woman. They relate to almost every conceivable phase of the Christian daily life; and no spiritual minded person can read them without wonder at the extent of her success in opening Heaven on earth. We should greatly rejoice to find this sort of reading becoming popular among Christian people again as it was in our boyhood. Especially would we recommend this book to Christian ladies as a model of the beautiful in the Christian daily life.

Mr. Davidson has the Book for sale.

THE GOLDEN LADDER SERIES.—In six volumes, Illustrated. By the author of "Little Katy and Jolly Jim" &c. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This set of juvenile books gotten up in such attractive style, indicates that the Holidays are again approaching; and that the Messrs. Carters are determined to keep up if not outstrip their neighbors in the publication of attractive books for the young.

These six volumes are all designed to teach an important lesson on prayer as set forth in the six parts of the Lord's prayer. The story in each of the books is interesting and just the kind of a Christmas present that a boy or girl would like to have. Mr. Davidson has them for sale at his bookstore on Third street.

"THE OMNIPOTENCE OF LOVING-KINDNESS" being a narrative of a Lady's seven months work among the fallen in Glasgow. 16mo, pp. 340. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This volume is what its title states—a narrative of the faithful efforts of a Christian lady in Glasgow to reclaim the fallen women in that city; and the result of her efforts, especially with those who had been seduced into such a course of life by the wiles, falsehood and treachery of their utterly abandoned was truly wonderful. In many instances, so recorded, did this lady meet with a rich reward for all her labors, in beholding a thorough and radical change of heart, wrought by the Spirit of God, causing these rescued ones to praise God for his great mercy toward them in snatching them as brands from the everlasting burning.

The narrative is a beautiful illustration of the glorious provisions of the blessed gospel.—"Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." The motto of the book is an expression of the great Dr. Chalmers, and it is a true motto. It was beautifully exemplified by Him who went about doing good, and has always a charm, a power about it which even the most hardened in sin can scarcely resist. We honor the lady who has the moral heroism to go into those dens of iniquity upon such an errand of love and compassion to the fallen and degraded of her sex. The book is for sale by Mr. Davidson, 95 Third street near Market.

PEACE WITH GOD. By Rev. Wm. Adams, D. D. New York, Robt. Carter & Bros.

This is a sermon on Romans V:1. by the pastor of one of the Presbyterian

Churches in New York city in connection with the New School. It is an evangelical discourse.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE for September has been laid upon our table. Its contents are as follows, viz. Sir Brook Brooke Part XVI Westminster School-Conclusion; English Converts to Romanism; Nina Balak; the story of a maiden of Prague—Part III. The Great Woods in Winter. The Great Unrepresented. Cornelius O'Dowd—continued. The Legacy of the Late Government.

Address, the Leonard Scott Publishing Company, 38 Walker street, New York

## Mental and Moral Epidemics—the Jerks.

The singular phrenzy of "loyalty" which has seized upon our Prote-tant churches during the last five years has doubtless puzzled many a sober thinker. To find men, whom we always supposed to be good Christian men, filled with the spirit of blood-thirst, as if seized upon by some demon, as in the "possession" we read of in the New Testament, is to us one of the most curious puzzles in the science of human nature. Nor can we account for it except upon the theory that it is one of those epidemics which so frequently in the history of Christianity have seized upon the Church during an era of excitement.

Readers of religious biographies will recall the marvelous religious epidemics which have sometimes run their course under the revival preachings of Whitfield and Wesley, the Tennents and Blairs; at the Cambuslang and Kilsyth revivals in Scotland. These cases show that even a pure religion is subject to such singular epidemics. The cases of the Witchcraft epidemic, and the Crusading epidemic that spread over all Europe illustrate their connection with ignorance and false religion.

The revival in Kentucky and Tennessee sixty years ago, furnish perhaps the most remarkable illustration on record of the excesses to which these curious movements of the human mind may reach. In an old number of the Repository we find an account of some of these phenomena, by an intelligent minister who witnessed them. Our readers will no doubt be gratified to have an extract from this account. Says the writer:

"I proceed to relate a case or two, respecting the exercise called the jerks. This succeeded sometime after the falling exercise, and I believe, had its origin in East Tennessee, at least it was, to use a commercial phrase, first imported into Kentucky from the States. It was a kind of a jerking of the body, and the aged and the young, it was entirely involuntary, dreaded and hated, and even cursed by some; while it was desired, and courted, and highly prized by others. It came on something like the *hiccough*, without any premonitory symptom, and left the subject equally without any sensible effect. During its prevalence, I made several experiments; being a young minister, and inexperienced, I knew not what to do with it. While preaching, I have, after a smooth and gentle course of expression, suddenly changed my voice, and language, expressing something awful and alarming, and instantly, some dozen or twenty persons, or more, would simultaneously, be jerked forward, where they were sitting, with a suppressed groan, and a look somewhat like the barking of a dog. And so it would either continue or abate according to the tenor, or strain of my discourse. The strong sympathy, and intimate correspondence between the mind and body, was fully manifested, by this experiment, producing the jerking, which immediately followed. The first subject of this exercise that attracted my attention, was the young wife of one of our elders. She was affected by this operation very gently, she felt no pain whatever, but rather the reverse—a pleasing sensation—could give a satisfactory account of its operation. She went to the country village, on a public day, to do a little shopping. I accompanied her on our way home. She was entirely free from any operation of the jerks. I determined in my own mind to try an experiment, conversed freely and somewhat jocularly with her on secular matters, to divert her mind as far as I could in that direction as I thought necessary; and then immediately changed the subject to that of a very serious and solemn character. I am certain, not two minutes had elapsed, before she was completely affected with this exercise. Her body from the saddle and upwards, appeared to pitch forward half way to the horse's neck, six or eight times in a minute. I was fully satisfied she could not prevent it. My mind became, some time after, greatly excited about this exercise. I could not encourage it, and yet, being a young minister, I was afraid to say anything against it, publicly, as it had many friends and advocates. At length it was found to be detrimental in various ways; besides interrupting public worship, it deterred many from attending altogether, being impressed with the belief that it was "catching." But it was not confined to the public assembly; it invaded the private and domestic circle, while engaged in domestic business, or travelling on the road. The same individual was frequently the subject of it, young and old, male and female, refined and unrefined, the pious and the wicked, were alike under its operations.

Take another singular case, stated to me by Mr. McCreedy. A young man, son of an elder, to avoid attending a camp meeting in the neighborhood with the family feigned himself sick. On the morning of the Sabbath, he continued in bed, until the family had all started for the meeting, he being left alone, except a few small blacks. When thus alone, he congratulated himself on his success, by the deception he had practised on his parents. He raised up his head, and looking all around his room, smiled at the adventure, but lest it might not be complete, lest some one might have occasioned to linger, or return, and so be detected, he resumed his clinical position, covering over his head, and in a short time directed his thoughts towards the camp ground. He fancied the multitude assembling, the services about the lodges, the bodily exercises, as he had seen them, how in operation. He fancied a certain female now in full exercise, "now she's at it, now she's at it." In a moment he was taken with the same exercise, the jerks, was hurled out of his bed, and jerked hither and thither, all around the room, up against the wall, and in every fashion. He had never been affected by bodily exercise before, but now

found himself perfectly unmanageable. He had heard it said, and indeed witnessed the fact, that *praying* would produce the effect. He tried it, and the desired effect followed immediately. He felt no more the effects of the exercise than a person does after the hiccough. He supposed it all a dream, a mere conceit, illusion or something of the kind, resumed his bed, commenced his pranks again, and again was the scene acted over, only a little worse. The same remedy was resorted to, and he again became in *status quo*. He arose, dressed himself, sauntered about awhile, wanted some employment to pass the time away, he thought himself of a *day skin* in the vat, that needed *unhairing*, he drew it out, laid it on the beam, rolled up his sleeves, grasped the graining knife, lifted it up to make the first stroke, when lo, it was instantaneously flung out of his grasp, and he was jerked back, over the fence, up and down, until he resorted to his old remedy and again obtained relief. Feelings before, perfectly free from any sensible or evil effects, as strong and resolute, and determined, and reckless as ever, he ventured again, and assumed his instrument, and resumed his posture over the subject of his intended operation, when immediately, before he could make one stroke, the whole scene, only, if possible, tenfold worse, was acted over again. It was much more severe, and greatly protracted. The usual remedy, at first, failed; he became alarmed, thought the Lord was now about to kill him, became deeply convicted of his great folly and wickedness, became composed again in body, but now greatly agitated and concerned in mind, called a *little* jerk, which he pointed him to the dog skin, which he was afraid now to approach, directed where to lay it away, returned to his room weeping and crying to God for mercy, and in this condition was found on the return of the family. He shortly afterward obtained a good hope through grace, and gave relation of facts to the session, was received, and in the judgment of Christian charity, gave satisfactory evidence by a scriptural experience, and godly living, that he was a renewed man, and redeemed sinner saved by grace.

I will trouble you with only one case more. One evening I rode six miles up Green river, and preached at a Mr. M. Whorter's in a Baptist settlement. The house was crowded. The people were attentive, until I had finished my discourse and had prayed, and was about to sing the last hymn, I was forestalled by an enthusiastic kind of man, who started a song with a lively tune. Several young women began to jerk backwards and forwards. The seats were immediately removed, to afford room and prevent them from being hurt. I was about to sing, when I would call the *whirling exercise*. She went round like a top, I think at least fifty times a minute, and continued, without intermission, for at least an hour. It exceeded by far, anything of the kind I had ever witnessed. I was told she had the jerks nearly three years. She did not appear exhausted, complained of pain or distress if the bystanders did not continue singing. I became perfectly tired, my preaching seemed to be all gone, and to have been rather in the way, from what took place afterwards. I was seated with some of them, and cautioned them. They see this exercise continued, more or less, in one or another place for a long time. It, however, in the general, gradually disappeared, especially from the Presbyterian church, and thus afforded a very happy relief. I was heartily glad when it was entirely gone. After all these novelties left us, the church, like one enfeebled and exhausted, sunk down into formality and apathy. After she had passed through the fire, she came forth more purified, and more zealous of the faith. For nearly twenty years afterwards was she without a revival. But blessed be God, she has recovered, and her borders have been greatly enlarged, and her stakes strengthened, and I trust in God, she will never seek and feel such another shock. In her wisdom and experience, I believe such things will never find favor and encouragement again.

For the Free Christian Commonwealth.

There has been much talk about the religious obligation to obey all the commands of "the powers that be," in the Church and in the State. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church enjoins obedience to all the *lawful* commands of both, but there is not one word enjoining obedience to the *unlawful* commands of either. The men who framed and adopted that confession, did not believe the doctrine of passive obedience. The members of the Westminster Assembly, all the time they were framing the confession, were in open rebellion against their long established government; and the men in this country a few years before they adopted that confession, were in open rebellion against their established government. Dr. Witherspoon, one of them, had signed his name to the Declaration of Independence. The Westminster Confession of Faith—the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and the Constitution of the United States were all of them formed by rebels. But they were successful rebels, and were honored and praised. Had they been unsuccessful, they would have been condemned and abused.

Fictitious Literature—Its enfeebling influence on the mind.

This is a subject of great practical importance, and demands the most serious attention; for there is a wide-spread disposition among many who belong to Christian families and churches to devote a large portion of their time to the reading of fictitious works. I do not mean those corrupt and debasing novels in which vice is presented in attractive features, and which tend so powerfully to influence the passions, and corrupt the moral tastes and habits; for these must be condemned by every right minded individual, and excluded from every Christian circle. But I refer to works of a less objectionable character, and which are generally regarded as harmless. That they are interesting to a certain class of readers, and present some amusing, though often distorted, views of life as it exists among persons of little social refinement and destitute of cultivated piety, is admitted. Nevertheless, they are to a great extent destitute of solid thought and instruction, of all right views of truth and duty, and all reference to the wants and interests of the soul. And, what is still worse, they frequently present unscriptural views of sin; excuse vice as a misfortune, tolerate in some cases its commis-

sion, and hold up as fanatical a life of devoted piety.

To devote time and attention to such books must be variously injurious. But at present I will speak only of its *enfeebling influence on the mind*. All will readily admit, that should a man devote himself continuously to the reception of physical pleasure, without exerting his energies, he would become incapable of much exertion, and unable to endure much fatigue. He may have the stature of the man, but he certainly would not have manly strength and vigor. The bones and muscles which spring from firmness and power, would lack tone from exercise and toil.

Precisely similar is the influence on the mind of devotion to these fictitious books. It is constantly enfeebling and deteriorating. "It cannot," says a distinguished writer, "but be injurious to the human mind, never to be called in to effort. The habit of receiving pleasure without any exertion of thought, by the mere excitement of curiosity and sensibility; may be justly ranked among the worst effects of a libel novel reading. Like idle morning visitors, the brisk and breathless periods hurry in and hurry off in quick and profitless succession; each, indeed, for the moment of its stay, prevents the pain of vacancy, while it indulges the love of sloth; but altogether they leave the mistress of the house—the soul I mean—flat and exhausted, incapable of attending to her own concerns, and unfitted for the conversation of more rational guests."

The late Dr. Arnold of Rugby, than whom no man was better fitted to judge, said, "Childishness in boys of good abilities seems to me to be a growing fault; and I do not know to what to ascribe it, except to the great number of exciting books of amusement, like *Pickwick* and *Nickelby*, &c. &c. These completely satisfy all the intellectual appetite of a boy, which is rarely very voracious, and leave him totally palsied, not only for his regular work, but for all good literature of all sorts, even for history and poetry."

This habit is one of the alarming features of our day. And we would extend parents to exercise the utmost watchfulness for their children, and to exhibit to them in this particular a consistent example, lest they should become enervated to this pernicious habit of making these publications their only mental food. The habit is to the mind what indulgence in intoxicating drink is to the body. In both cases there is a constant craving for excitement, and for an excitement which unites the faculties, and draws away the affections from duty, from heaven, and from God.

The late Isaac Taylor, speaking to parents said,—"and his words are full of practical wisdom,—I am intending no onslaught on novel reading. I have no Puritanic horror of novels. I have listened to most of those that were the popular fictions of bygone time. I would say this only to the heads of families: Make your choice; freely admit from the circulating library the three-volume novels of the season, and then be content to read that all residue of zest is gone as to history, to biography, science, and everything else that is real and genuine, Christianity included."

Novel reading is an infatuation which masters souls as surely as drinking does. Many are the melancholy spectacles which one encounters in towns; as, for instance, a woman, wasted, worn, in tatters, and near starvation: this is a sad sight. And so it is a sad sight to meet the well-dressed lady of forty or fifty, hastening home with the three great volumes which are all to be devoured between the noon of to-day and the dawn of to-morrow.

The alternative for the individual and the family is this: novel reading, with the consequent *enervated* and utter apathy; or else genuine feeling, employment, with zest as to whatever is real in life, in history, in science, in poetry, and general literature. Fiction of any sort in one scale, and reality in the other,—the beam will never stand on the level.—[*Christian Treasury*.]

## For the Children.

[From the Children's Friend.]

Patty's Talk with Papa.

"Do look, papa, what is the meaning of this horrible picture? See those poor children sleeping so sweetly in their bed, with their arms over each other; and those three dreadful looking men, one with a torch, and two holding a feather-bed over them. Oh! I see, underneath it says: 'The murder of the princes in the Tower.' What princes were all of them formed by rebels. But they were successful rebels, and were honored and praised. Had they been unsuccessful, they would have been condemned and abused."

"The famous Tower of London—the great prison of England, where so many kings and queens, and other great people, of that country, have suffered and died. It was founded eight hundred years ago, by William the Conqueror. Those poor boys were the children of Edward IV., and were sent there by their uncle the Duke of Gloucester, because he intended to seize the crown for himself. He hired a miserable creature named Sir James Tyrell to put them to death, who went at midnight with these three men, Slater, Deighton and Forest, and while he stood at the door, they went in and smothered the poor children, then took their bodies and buried them at the foot of the stairs, deep in the ground under the stones. The Duke then caused himself to be proclaimed king under the title of Richard III."

"Oh! what a horribly wicked king he was, and I am so sorry for the poor little boys."

"Yes, Richard was a very wicked man indeed. He had many other persons murdered beside his two innocent nephews, for he determined to be king though he had to commit dreadful crimes to gain his end. But God did not suffer this monster to reign long; after two unquiet years, he was slain in a battle fought near Bosworth field. Thus he was soon called to render up his account to the great King of heaven and earth. His body did not even rest in peace; for in the reign of Henry VIII., the stone coffin in which he was buried, was used as a horse-trough at the White Horse Inn."

"Papa, I used to think I would like to be a queen or a great person; but so many of them were put to death, and so many were very wicked, that I am glad I am not one."

"The great secret of happiness, my dear, is in being satisfied in the condition in which God has placed us, and in trying to do our duty both to God and man. And remember God will keep those who depend on Him from committing these dreadful crimes, whether they are kings or beggars. Moses, one of the greatest men that ever lived, loved and served God, and how different he was from King Richard III."

"Yes, indeed, papa, you know he might have been king of Egypt, and he would not have had to commit crimes, as Richard did, either; but the Bible says, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." I suppose, as they were heathen people, he knew he could not serve God if he was their king."

"Yes, and he was looking forward to an inheritance in a much greater kingdom even than Egypt with all its splendors; and we can scarcely in our day, conceive of the grandeur and magnificence of Egypt, in the time of Moses. Such immense buildings of marble—whole cities of stately palaces and magnificent temples. Such profusions of carvings, sculpture, and paintings, and gold, precious stones, and gorgeous dresses. Such enchanting pleasure-grounds, with their trees, flowers, and statues; and vast artificial lakes, with beautiful galleys and pleasure boats; and such vast and powerful navies and armies. Then too, Moses was a learned man, and he gave up the society of the wise men of Egypt; but instead of them he talked with God, and He instructed him, and foretold him what would come to pass. As King of Egypt he would have been forgotten long ago; but now, wherever the Bible is read, he is known as the great leader and law-giver of Israel, and the friend of God. You see Moses did not lose anything by his choice. God has said, 'them that honour me, I will honour,' and Moses has been honoured even in heaven."

"How so, papa, do we know about Moses now?"

"When our Saviour was transfigured on Mount Tabor, Moses and Elias were sent to commune with Him; and the greatest honour that can be conferred on any one, is to be sent ambassador from one court to another."

"What is an ambassador, papa?"

"An ambassador, is one employed by a prince or State, at the court of another, to carry important messages or manage important affairs."

"Thank you for telling me all this, papa. When I look at my picture, and think how wicked Richard was, I will think of Moses too, and remember that he tried to please God, while Richard only tried to please himself."

"And do not fail, dear child, to ask God to help you too, to choose His way, before your own. Remember, we can do nothing good of ourselves, but we can do all things with God's help."

AMICA.

BE YE ALSO READY.—A boy lay on his sick bed, weak and pale from a severe sickness. He had early loved the Saviour, and though there was much to make life pleasant—loving parents and a beautiful home—he was willing to die.

"You are going to heaven, my dear boy," said the minister, something his way. "You are now in the dark valley, but Christ is with you. I am with you always, even unto the end." "I know it, I know it," answered the child; "I am with you always; but say the other, 'What other my darling?'"

asked his mother. Jamie's breath grew shorter; but at last he said, turning his eyes full upon his father, who was not a Christian, "Be ye also ready." Oh, God, may my father never be able to forget, "Be ye also ready." "My darling Jamie," said his father, throwing his arms around him, "you must not die." "Be ye also ready," again came from the cold lips pressed against his cheek. It was the last effort of that little life. Jamie had finished the business his heavenly Father had given him to do below, and his spirit went up to its higher service, to engage with the holy angels in glorifying Him forever in heaven. And that father was not able to forget the last message of his departed boy, but at once sought the Saviour, that he might be "also ready" to join him in the new Jerusalem.

"Child, I will take Thy Hand."

A Reply to "Father, take my hand."

The way is dark, my child; but leads to light. I would not always have thee walk by sight: My feelings now thou canst not understand. I meant it so: but I will take thy hand, And through the gloom Lead safely home.

My child!

The day goes fast, my child! but is the night Darker to me than day? In me is light; Keep close to me, and every spectral band Of fears shall vanish. I will take thy hand, And through the night Lead up to light.

My child!

The way is long, my child! but it shall be Not one step longer than is best for thee, And thou shalt know it all, when thou shalt stand Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand, And quick and straight Led to heaven's gate.

My child!

The path is rough, my child! But oh! how sweet Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet, When thou shalt reach the borders of that land To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand; And safe and blest With me shalt rest.

My child!

The cross is heavy, child! Yet there was One Who bore a heavier for thee: my Son, My Well-beloved. For Him bear thine; and stand With Him at last; and from Thy Father's hand, Thy cross laid down, Receive a crown.

My child! H. N. C.

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